THE Christian History;

Containing Accounts of the Propagation and Revival of Religion in *Great Britain*, *America*, &c.

Saturday NOVEMBER 17. 1744. § N°. 90.

The Rev. Mr. G. TENNENT's *Account of the Revival of Religion in* Pennsylvania *&c. finished.*

IN *some Places* of *this Province* some Years ago, particularly in *Nottingham*, *Fogs-Manor*, *Whitelaveek*, *Neshamine*, and *elsewhere*, there have been such general Lamentations in the Time of Preaching, that the Speaker's Voice has been almost drowned with the *Cries* of the *Distressed*, even after they have been entreated again and again to restrain themselves; yea and sometimes when the Speaker discours'd in a *Gospel Strain*, divers Persons in *some Places* in *this Province* have fallen down to the Ground, in the Time of Sermon, as tho' they were stabb'd with a Sword: and what tho' some have lost their Impressions, and relapsed into their sordid Impieties; this is no more than what the Scriptures inform us did happen in the *Apostolick Times*: yet it is well known that many of them (so far as we are capable of judging by Mens Speech & Practise) have been brought to a sound Conversion.

I think it needless here to offer a Reply to the *Cavils* of *Opposers*, which are as numerous as invidious and impertinent: but this I must say, that mine Eyes and Ears have seen and heard so much of the Appearances and Fruits of the late Revival of Religion, that I must reject Religion altogether and turn Infidel, if I should dispute and oppose the same. May it please the gracious GOD to pardon those unhappy Men, who have set themselves in Opposition to the Work of the most high GOD, and painted it in black & odious Colours, and let them see their Sin and Danger before it be too late.

Dear Sir, I did not think, when I began to write, to offer any more than our *prefatory Atteſtation*; but being urged to mention ſomething of what I had ſeen and heard, and finding a Pleaſure in the Subject, I have added (with the ſtricteſt Regard to *Truth* and *Soberneſs*) theſe few haſty Hints concerning ſome *Matters of Fact* which I know to be true; and ſhall leave to your own Diſcretion to do with them as you ſhall ſee meet.

I am, Sir, Your's &c.
Gilbert Tennent.

An Account of the Revival of Religion at Freehold *and* other Places *in the Province of* NEW-JERSEY, *in a Letter from the Rev. Mr.* William Tennent, *Miniſter of the Goſpel, to the Reverend Mr.* Prince.

Freehold, Octob. 11th 1744.

Reverend and dear Sir,

I Deſire to notice thankfully, the late rich Diſplay of our glorious EMANUEL's Grace, in ſubduing by his Word and Spirit Multitudes of Sinners to himſelf, both in *this* and *other* Lands. O may he go on conquering and to conquer, until he has ſubdued all Things unto himſelf!

Neither can I think but that the writing of a *Hiſtory* of the great Things our LORD has done among us, has a Tendency to, and will by the bleſſing of GOD upon it, excite Generations yet unborn to praiſe his glorious Name, and thereby his Honour will be advanced, and his Triumphs increaſed!

Moſt gladly therefore do I comply with your Requeſt, and herewith ſend ſuch an Account as I can, of what the LORD has done among us.

But herein as I muſt be very general, having never made any Memorandums in Writing of the LORD's Work here; ſo I truſt I ſhall be ſtrictly true, for the LORD hates a falſe Witneſs.

This Place lies *Southweſt* from *New-York*, and is diſtant from it about *fifty Miles*. It was the *firſt* in the EAST-JERSEY, on the *Weſt* Side of *Rariton River*, which was ſettled with a Goſpel Miniſtry. This was owing under GOD to the

the Agency of ſome *Scots* People, that came to it: among whom there was none ſo painful in this bleſſed Undertaking as one *Walter Ker*; who in the Year 1685, for his faithful and conſcientious Adherence to GOD and his Truth, as profeſſed by the *Church of Scotland*, was *there* apprehended, and ſent into *this Country*, under a Sentence of perpetual *Baniſhment*. By which it appears that the Devil and his Inſtruments, loſt their Aim in ſending him from Home; where its unlikely he could ever have been ſo ſerviceable to CHRIST's Kingdom, as he has been here. He is yet alive; and bleſſed be GOD, he is flouriſhing in his old Age, being in his 88th Year.

But to return; the publick Means of Grace diſpenſed here, were at firſt for a Seaſon, too much like a miſcarrying Womb and dry Breaſts; ſo that the major Part of the Congregation could not be ſaid to have ſo much as a Name to live. *Family Prayer* was unpractis'd by all, a very few excepted; Ignorance ſo overſhadowed their Minds, that the Doctrine of the *new Birth* when clearly explained, and powerfully preſs'd upon them, as abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation, (by that faithful Preacher of GOD's Word Mr. *Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghouſa*, a *Low Dutch* Miniſter, and *ſome other Engliſh* Miniſters who were occaſionally here,) was made a common Game of; ſo that not only the *Preachers* but *Profeſſors* of that Truth were called in Deriſion *New-Born*, and look'd upon as holders forth of ſome *new* and *falſe Doctrine*. And indeed their *Practice* was as bad as their *Principles*, viz. Looſe and Prophane.

In the Year 1729 their Miniſter removed from them, and they were ſo grievouſly divided among themſelves, that it appeared improbable, they would ever agree in the Settlement of another. In this miſerable helpleſs and almoſt hopeleſs Condition they lay; and few among them had either Eyes to ſee, or Hearts to bewail their woful wretched Circumſtances. Thus they ſeem'd to be caſt out as the Prophet *Ezekiel* repreſents it, in the 16th *Chap.* of his Book and the 5th *Verſe*. But the LORD who is rich in Mercy, of his unexpected and unmerited *Love paſſed by them lying in their Blood*, and ſaid unto many of them ſince that Day, *Live*; and live they ſhall to all Eternity.

About this Time my dear Brother *John* (who is now with JESUS) was licens'd as a Candidate for the ſacred Miniſtry:

a Youth whom the AUTHOR of every goodGift had uncommonly furniſhed for that important Truſt. To him Application was made by ſome of the Congregation, intreating that he would ſupply them for a Time: To which (with the Leave of the *Preſbytery*) he conſented. But ere he went, he often told me, that he was heartily ſorry he had engaged to go among them; for it ſeemed to him that they were a People whom GOD had given up for their Abuſe of the Goſpel. But the LORD's Thoughts are not our Thoughts, nor his Ways our Ways: For when he had preached *four* or *five Sabbaths* in the Place, (which was the whole Time he tarried among them at firſt) the LORD ſo bleſſed his Labours, ingaging People to attend to the Things which were ſpoken, and in ſtirring them up to *ſearch the Scriptures*, whether theſe Things were ſo or not, and withall enabling him to preach to them with ſuch uncommon Freedom and Earneſtneſs; that he told me he was fully perſuaded, CHRIST JESUS had a large Harveſt to bring home there; ſo that tho' they were a poor broken People, yet if they call'd him he would ſettle among them, albeit he ſhould be put to beg his Bread by ſo doing. *April* the 15th. 1730. the Congregation unanimouſly call'd him; which he accepting of, was ordained the 19th of *November* following, and continued with them until *April* 23d. 1732, and was then tranſlated to Glory.

During his ſhort Time, his Labours were greatly bleſſed; ſo that the Place of public Worſhip was uſually crouded with People of all Ranks and Orders, as well as Profeſſions that obtain'd in that Part of the Country, and they ſeem'd to hear generally as for their Lives: yea, ſuch as were won't to go to thoſe Places for their Diverſion, *viz.* To hear News or ſpeak to their Trades-Men, *&c.* even on the *Lord's-Day*, as they themſelves have ſince confeſs'd, were taken in the Goſpel Net: a ſolemn Awe of GOD's Majeſty poſſeſſed many, ſo that they behav'd themſelves as at his Bar while in his Houſe. Many Tears were uſually ſhed, when he preached, and ſometimes the Body of the Congregation was mov'd or affected. I can ſay, and let the LORD alone have the Glory of it, that I have ſeen both *Miniſter* and *People* wet with their Tears as with a bedewing Rain. It was no uncommon Thing to ſee Perſons in the Time of Hearing, *ſobbing* as if their Hearts would break, but without any public Out-cry; and ſome have been *carry'd out* of the Aſſembly (being overcome) as if they had been dead.---

Religion

Religion was then the general Subject of Diſcourſe, tho' they did not all approve of the Power of it: the *holy Bible* was ſearched by People on both Sides of the Queſtion, and Knowledge ſurprizingly increaſed! The Terror of GOD fell generally upon the Inhabitants of *this Place*; ſo that Wickedneſs as aſhamed in a great Meaſure hid it ſelf; Frolicking, Dancing, Horſe-racing, with other profane Meetings were broken up.

Some of the jolly Companions of both Sexes, were conſtrained by their Conſciences to meet together, the Men by themſelves, and the Women by themſelves, to confeſs privately their Abominations before GOD, and beg the Pardon of them.

Before my Brother's Death, by Reaſon of his bodily Weakneſs, and Inability on that Account to officiate publickly, I *preached here* about *ſix Months*. In which Time, many came enquiring *what they ſhould do to be ſaved*, and ſome to tell *what the* LORD *had done for their Souls*. But the Bleſſing on his Labours to the Converſion and Converſion of Souls, was more diſcernible *ſome Months after his Death*, than any Time in his Life; almoſt in every Neighbourhood, I cannot ſay in every Houſe, there were Sin ſick Souls, longing for and ſeeking after the dear Phyſician JESUS CHRIST: ſeveral of whom I no Ways doubt have ſince that Time ſincerely cloſed with him, and are healed: Glory, Glory to his holy Name be given for ever and ever, *Amen!*

Sometime after my Brother's Deceaſe, the Congregation *called me* to labour among them ſtatedly: which I accepted and was *ordained*, *October* the 25th. 1733. Thus my LORD ſent me to reap that on which I had beſtowed but little Labour: May this Conſideration be bleſſed to make me thankful and humble while I live.

I muſt further declare to the Honour of GOD, that he has not yet left us, altho' awfully provok'd by our crying Crimes; but *ever ſince* that more remarkable Out-pouring of his SPIRIT has continued to bleſs his own Ordinances, to the Converſion, Converſion and Conſolation of precious Souls: ſo that *every Year*, ſome, more or leſs, have been in a Judgment of Charity added (ſavingly) to his myſtical Body: To his holy Name be all the Glory. In the mean Time, I would have it obſerv'd, that *two* or *three Years laſt* paſt, have afforded fewer Inſtances of this kind than formerly. However thro' Grace

ſome

ſome have been *lately* awakened who are even now ſeeking JESUS ſorrowing.

What the *Number* is of thoſe who have taſted the ſweet Fruits of the REDEEMER's Purchaſe in a ſaving Manner, in this Congregation, I cannot tell: It is my Comfort that the LORD will reckon them; for he knows who are his: and indeed none but the omniſcient GOD is equal to the difficult Province of determining certainly concerning the internal States of Men. Yet I may be bold to ſay, that to all Appearance, both Old and Young, Males and Females, have been renewed; tho' none ſo young as I have heard of in ſome other Places. Some *Negroes* I truſt are made free in CHRIST; and more ſeem to be unfeignedly ſeeking after it.

But after all that the LORD has been pleaſed to do among us, I am perſuaded that the *greater Number* by far, are yet *in the Gall of Bitterneſs and Bond of Iniquity*. This makes me ſometimes ready to wiſh, that I had in the Wilderneſs the Lodging-Place of a Wayfaring-Man, that I might leave my People and go from them; or rather that my Head were Waters, and mine Eyes a Fountain of Tears, that I might weep Day and Night for them!

Such as have been converted were every of them prepared for it by a ſharp *Law-Work* of *Conviction*, diſcovering to them in a Heart-affecting Manner, their *Sinfulneſs* both by Nature and Practiſe, as well as their Liableneſs to Damnation for their *original* and *actual* Tranſgreſſions. Neither could they ſee any Way in themſelves by which they could eſcape the divine Vengeance; for that their whole Life paſt was not only a continued Act of Rebellion againſt GOD, but their preſent Endeavours to better it, ſuch as Prayers, *&c.* were ſo imperfect, that *they* could not endure them, and much leſs they concluded would a holy GOD. They all confeſs'd the *Juſtice* of GOD in their eternal Perdition; and thus have been ſhut up to the bleſſed Neceſſity of ſeeking Relief by Faith in CHRIST alone.

It wou'd be endleſs to mention the *Evils* they *complained* of; viz. *Ignorance*, *Unbelief*, *Hardneſs* of Heart, *Hatred* againſt GOD, his Laws, and People, *Wordlineſs*, *Wandrings* of Heart in Duty, *Pride*, *Senſuality*, *Sloth*, &c.

With what Grief, Shame and Self-loathing have I heard them bewail their *Loſs of Time* and *Neglect* of the *great* Goſpel *Salvation*.

Thoſe

Thoſe that were *Communicants* before their Awakening, have with Trembling declar'd that their *unworthy Partaking* grieved them more then anyThing ever they did ; for hereby they had as it were murdered the LORD.

It's almoſt incredible to relate, the *Indignation* that ſuch awakned Sinners expreſs'd againſt *themſelves*, on the Account of their Sinfulneſs. They look'd upon themſelves to be meer *Monſters* of Nature, and that none were worſe if any ſo bad. Others ſignified that they could not find their Pictures out of Hell,and that they were juſt fit Companions for the Damned, and none elſe.

Let it be here noted, that ſome who have expreſs'd themſelves in the Manner I have mentioned, were before *taken for Believers* both by themſelves and others, being ſober and regular in their Walk.

The *Sorrows* of the convinced, were not all alike, either in *Degree* or *Continuance*.

Some have not tho't it poſſible, for them to be ſaved, if GOD would vindicate the Honour of his Juſtice : But theſe Tho'ts continued not long at a Time, bleſſed be GOD.

Others tho't it was poſſible, but not very probable, becauſe of their Vileneſs.

The *greateſt Degree* of *Hope* which any had, under a Conviction that iſſued well, was a *may be* ; ' *Peradventure*, or ' *may be GOD will have Mercy on me*,' ſaid the Sinner.

Some in coming to JESUS have been much rent with *blaſphemous* and other *horrible Temptations*, which have turn'd their Moiſture into the Drought of Summer ; who now thro' pure Grace ſerve GOD, without ſuch Diſtractions, in Gladneſs and Singleneſs of Heart.

The *Conviction* of *ſome* has been *Inſtantanious* ; by the HOLY SPIRIT's applying the Law to the Conſcience, and diſcovering to the Eye of the Underſtanding, as it were all their *Heart-Deceits* very ſpeedily ; by which they have been ſtabbed as with a Sword.

But the *Conviction* of *others*, has been in a *more progreſſive* Way. They have had diſcovered to them one Abomination after another in *Life* ; and from thence were led to behold the *Fountain* of all Corruption in the *Heart* ; and thus they were conſtrain'd to deſpair of *Life* by the *Law*, and conſequently to flee to JESUS as the only Door of Hope, and ſo reſt intirely on *his Merit* for Salvation.

After

After the aforeſaid ſorrowful Exerciſes, ſuch as were reconciled to GOD, have been bleſſed with *the* SPIRIT *of Adoption, enabling them to cry,* ABBA FATHER. But ſome have had *greater Degrees* of *Conſolation* than others, in Proportion to the *Clearneſs* of the *Evidences* of their *Sonſhip.*

The LORD has drawn ſome out of the horrible Pit of Diſtreſs and Darkneſs, and brought them into the *Light of his Countenance.* He has fill'd their Hearts with Joy, and their Mouths with Praiſes; yea, given them the *full Aſſurance of Faith.*

Others have been bro't to *Peace in believing*; but have not had ſo great a Plerophory of Joy: Yet they go on in a religious Courſe, truſting in the LORD.

The *Way* they *have been comforted* is either by the Application of ſome particular *Promiſe* of *Holy Scripture*, or by a Soul-affecting *View* of the *Way of Salvation* by CHRIST, as free without Money and without Price: They were enabled to behold the valuable Mercies of the Covenant of Grace, freely tendered to the vileſt Tranſgreſſors, that were poor in their own Eyes, ſin-ſick, weary, and wounded, together with the Ability and Willingneſs of the LORD JESUS to relieve them from all the Evils, they either feard or felt. With this Way of Salvation their Souls were well pleaſed, and thereupon have ventured their Caſe into his Hands, expecting Help from him only; who has given them both Peace and Reſt, yea filled ſome of them with Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory. I remember not of any that receiv'd their firſt Comforts otherwiſe. Some few have retained their Confidence in GOD ever ſince, without any conſiderable Queſtionings of their State, altho' they have not always taſted the Comforts of it.

(To be finiſh'd in our next.)

N.B. In the laſt Paper, Line laſt but one, inſtead of next Morning, *read* next Evening. Soon after which, as we are ſince inform'd, Mr. *Whitefield* fell dangerouſly ill a ſecond Time, and ſo continued 'till Saturday Night, when he began to revive and is now in a hopeful Way of Recovery.